and the conscience is led to give its disapproval of it. An evil act, which we are bent upon committing, comes to be seen only as leading to happiness, and the conscience is kept from laying a sentence of disapprobation upon it. Doubts may arise as to the accuracy of these judgments, upon other views involuntarily suggesting themselves to the mind; but the will contrives to drive them away with all available speed.

Thus it is, that sin comes to be adopted as morally good. Hence the difficulty of getting a favourite sin condemned. Charge it at any one point, and it immediately assumes the name of some virtue to which it bears a partial resemblance. Is the man forgetting God, and the duties which he owes to him, that he may, through deep anxiety, and a contempt of present comforts, amass wealth, and purchase earthly possessions?—he calls his conduct by the name of industry. Is he selfishly and systematically employed in raising himself step by step in society, to the disregard of all higher claims?—he professes to be swayed by an innocent regard to the respect of his fellow-men. Is he in the way of despising the poor, of fostering a spirit of revenge, and avoiding the confession of sin?—his conduct passes for spirit and magnanimity. Is he addicted to rudeness, to quarrelsomeness, and profanity?—he claims the merit due to independence of thinking and acting. Is he led to give a servile obeisance to the prevailing opinion, or conceal his sentiments in the presence of persons of rank and name?—he shelters his conduct under the guise of modesty and civility of manners. It is in this way that we account for the perverted moral judgments of mankind.

(2.) *Men form too favourable an estimate of their own character.* A number of circumstances contribute to this end.

First of all, there is an unwillingness on the part of those who have committed sin, candidly to inspect themselves. Just as the

impenitent criminal would avoid the bar of the judge and the examination of the witnesses, so would the sinner flee from the sifting inspection of the moral law. Just as the murderer would visit any spot on this earth's wide surface rather than that at which the deed was committed, and recollect any scene of his past life more willingly than the blood which he shed, and the shrieks of the dying victim; so would the sinner draw back from everything that could remind him of his guilt. Or, if